

# How to Support those with Lived Experience of Suicide

People with lived experience are individuals who have experienced suicidal thoughts and feelings, survived a suicide attempt, or experienced a suicide loss. Some people may fit into more than one of these categories.

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## The importance of involving individuals with lived experience in suicide prevention

- People who have attempted suicide or have been affected by a suicide death are more likely to die by suicide. Engaging them in their own care has been shown to reduce suicide risk.
  - People with lived experience can serve as models of hope and resiliency for others at risk for suicide and who have lost someone to suicide.
  - The insights of people with lived experience are extremely valuable in prevention planning, treatment, and education. This leads to improved care, enhanced safety, reduced suicide attempts and deaths, and improved support for loss survivors.
  - Involving people with lived experience in suicide prevention efforts can help providers and professionals better tailor their approaches to meet the needs of the groups they are working with.
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## Core Values for Supporting People with Lived Experience

- 1 Foster hope and help people find meaning and purpose in life
  - 2 Preserve dignity and counter stigma, shame, and discrimination
  - 3 Connect people to peer supports
  - 4 Promote community connectedness
  - 5 Engage and support family and friends
  - 6 Respect and support cultural, ethnic, and/or spiritual beliefs and traditions
  - 7 Promote choice and collaboration in care
  - 8 Provide timely access to care and support
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## What You Can Do

- Hire people with lived experience to contribute to your suicide prevention efforts by being actively engaged in the planning and implementation of prevention efforts.
- Involve people with lived experience in decisions about their own treatment and care.
- Engage people with lived experience to provide peer support for people at risk for suicide and affected by a suicide.
- Partner with peer support services and organizations operated by people with lived experience, especially if your organization provides crisis and emergency services.